

*A Sixth Anthology of Writings
About Psychedelics*

EDITED BY RAYMOND SOULARD, JR.
& KASSANDRA KRAMER

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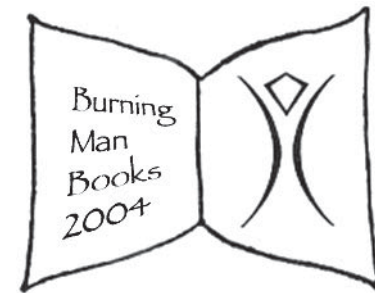
P O R T L A N D , O R E G O N



S C R I P T O R P R E S S

Stones of Your Mind:
*A Sixth Anthology of Writings
About Psychedelics*

edited by Raymond Soulard, Jr.
& Cassandra Kramer



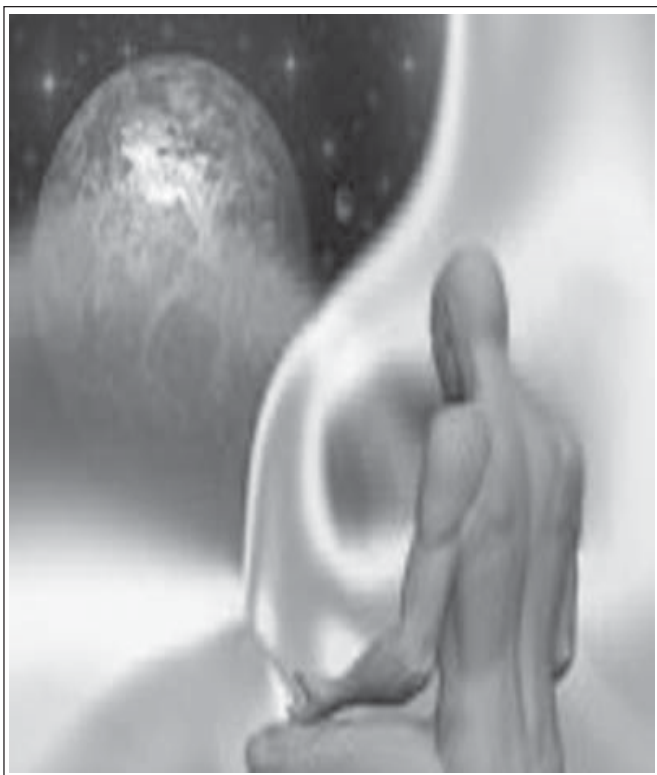
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**Stones of Your Mind:
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Writings About Psychedelics**

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This volume is for all those seeking to raise up hope
in themselves and the world . . .



We're playing those mind games together
Pushing the barriers planting seeds
Playing the mind guerrilla
Chanting the Mantra peace on earth
We all been playing those mind games forever
some kinda druid dudes lifting the veil
Doing the mind guerrilla
Some call it magic the search for the grail

Love is the answer and you know that for sure
Love is a flower you got to let it, you got to let it grow

So keep on playing those mind games together
Faith in the future outta the now
You just can't beat on those mind guerrillas
Absolute elsewhere in the stones of your mind
Yeah we're playing those mind games forever
Projecting our images in space and in time

Yes is the answer and you know and you know that for sure
Yes is surrender you got to let it, you got to let it go

So keep on playing those mind games together
Doing the ritual dance in the sun
Millions of mind guerrillas
Putting their soul power to the Karmic wheel
Keep on playing those mind games forever
Raising the spirit of peace and love

(I want you to make love, not war,
I know you've heard it before)

—**John Lennon,**
"Mind Games," 1973.

Who Are We?

by Thaddeus Golas

Chapter 1 of *The Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment*
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We are equal beings and the universe is our relations with each other. The universe is made of one kind of entity: each one is alive, each determines the course of his own existence.

Everything I say has its roots in that first paragraph, and it is possible to resolve any question by going back to it and thinking it through for yourself.

The universe is made of one kind of whatever-it-is, which cannot be defined. For our purpose, it isn't necessary to try to define it. All we need to do is assume that there is only *one kind* of whatever-it-is, and see if it leads to a reasonable explanation for the world as we know it.

The basic function of each being is expanding and contracting. Expanded beings are permeative; contracted beings are dense and impermeative. Therefore each of us, alone or in combination, may appear as space, energy, or mass, depending on the ratio of expansion to contraction chosen, and what kind of vibrations each of us expresses by alternating expansion and contraction. Each being controls his own vibrations.

A completely expanded being is space. Since expansion is permeative, we can be in the "same space" with one or more other expanded beings. In fact, it is possible for all the entities in the universe to be one space.

We experience expansion as awareness, comprehension, understanding, or whatever we wish to call it. When we are completely expanded, we have a feeling of total awareness, of being one with all life. At that level we have no resistance to any vibrations or interactions of other beings. It is timeless bliss, with unlimited choice of consciousness, perception, and feeling.

Space is a level of experience that any of us can reach, but it is difficult to talk about on our present plane precisely because it is unlimited. It is that which chooses limits and makes definitions. We might say: all experiences are available to the One Mind, and the One Mind is all of us or any of us at the highest level of expansion. Or we might theorize: God could not create anything more limited than Himself that would persist, but if He duplicates Himself, He can enjoy a persistent universe. Each entity, therefore, is a duplicate of God, "made in His image."

It doesn't matter what words we use: we exist and the universe exists, and it is possible to test this expansion-contraction idea within the limited scope of what is real to us as human beings, especially in atomic and sub-atomic studies.

When a being is totally contracted, he is a mass particle, completely imploded. To the degree that he is contracted, a being is unable to be in the same space with others, so contraction is felt as fear, pain, unconsciousness, ignorance, hatred, evil, and a whole host of strange feelings. At an extreme he has the feeling of being completely insane, of resisting everyone and everything, of being unable to choose the content of his consciousness. Of course, these are just the feelings appropriate to mass vibration levels, and he can get out of them at any time by expanding, by letting go of all resistance to what he thinks, sees, or feels.

When a being is alternating expansion and contraction, he is energy. My guess is that at the middle point, fifty percent expansion and fifty percent contraction, a being would be logical, non-subjective, egoless, and predictable. This may be the "zero" which is one side of energy equations in physics, as well as the "ego-death" we go through in expanding to higher levels of awareness.

It is important to note that energy is not a quantity of anything "objective." Energy, like space and matter, is what a lot of live beings are doing. Energy beings usually react to their neighbors in a way that is often predictable and apparently automatic, like falling dominoes. While relating to space beings, energy beings will appear to be high, vibrating rapidly, with a sense of increasing subjective freedom. Oriented to mass beings, they will be low energy, vibrating

more slowly with a growing feeling of subjective compulsion and disorder.

The universe is an infinite harmony of vibrating beings in an elaborate range of expansion-contraction ratios, frequency modulations, and so forth.

There is a particular set of feelings and ideas that goes with every variation, every combination, every vibration level. There is also a different perception of how other beings are relating from every different view-point. The thought of these possibilities is so staggering, trying to contain them in writing is so ridiculous, that it is hard for me to move my pen any further. However, what we are after is to isolate some basic attitudes that will recover awareness of our freedom to move around in this maze—or go straight to the top.

What we need to remember is that there is nobody here but us chickens. The entire universe is made of beings just like ourselves. Every particle in every atom is a live being. Every molecule or cell is a tribe of beings. Energy is a large number of us vibrating together. Space is an infinite number of our brothers and sisters in perfect bliss.

There is no important difference between live and dead matter, since both are made up of live entities. Not only is mass convertible into energy, but energy is convertible into space, and vice versa. It is our own withdrawal from awareness, our own mass condition that makes us see our brothers and sisters as objective matter, energy, and space. We always have the experiences and perceptions appropriate to our vibration level.

The same rules apply to all of us. The rules do not come from anywhere outside ourselves. They come from the truth that we are all equal, we all have the same range of possible behavior and experience. We are free to do anything we want to do, within the necessary laws of our relations as equal beings. And love must be the first law. Love is the *action* of being in the same space with other beings, which means that love is real, as real as we are. Love is not a limited idea, it is something we do, ultimately with our whole selves.

Perhaps many of us do not like it where we are in the universe now, but we can all be certain that we got where we are by our own

decisions to expand in love or withdraw from it.

The kind of brain and body you have, the family and society, the time in history you were born into, all these and more were determined by you yourself, by your degree of expansion, by your willingness to love. No one did anything to you. No one forced you. There is absolute justice in the experience that each of us is having every second of the day. In one sense we can all relax, because nothing is secret, nothing is lost, nothing is forgotten, no one is abandoned.

Each of us is the same kind of being, capable of outflowing attention and awareness, or withdrawing it. And that is all we need to do: Give full, permissive, loving attention to absolutely anything that we see in our minds, in our bodies, in our environment, in other people.

Expansion in love is an action that is available to every being in the universe all the time. A willing awareness will take us to heaven, a loving attitude will make us free. Nothing else controls our fate. Good or bad behavior is secondary. Whatever you are doing, love yourself for doing it. Whatever you are thinking, love yourself for thinking it. Love is the only dimension that needs to be changed. If you are not sure how it feels to be loving, love yourself for not being sure of how it feels. There is nothing on earth more important than the love which conscious beings feel towards each other, whether or not it is ever expressed.

There is no point in worry or wonder about worse or better spiritual conditions, although that game is available. You will not be able to rise above your present vibration level to stay until you love the way you are now.

No matter what your spiritual condition is, no matter where you find yourself in the universe, your choice is always the same: to expand your awareness or contract it. And you have to start where you are. There is nothing wrong with being where you are—it's one of the infinite experiences available to us. What you are, I can be. What I am, you can be.

Whatever we have done in withdrawing from full consciousness of the One Mind, we are doing now. Whatever we are doing will always be within us to do, even when we are not doing it,

and therefore is not to be resisted, but transcended. These are reminders I frequently use: *“That’s always within me.” “This, too, can be known with a fully expanded awareness.”*

We can trust the flow of the universe. If these rules of love are true, then they are effective whether we agree with them or not, whether we are conscious of them or not, whether or not we use words to talk about them. The reality of love is something you do for yourself, with or without words, and judge the results from your own experiences. All information like this exists in space all the time, and doesn’t need books for its reality. It’s always within you.

Beyond all reason is the mystery of love: you know we are all equal, no one in truth needs any help from anyone else, no one needs to be told anything or given anything—and then you do the most compassionate act anyway, do the best for your brothers and sisters that you have in you. I’m relaying what was given to me when I felt I needed it: if I felt that way, maybe someone else does, too. This is a letter to my brothers and sisters, a love note to try to show how, when we thought love wasn’t working, it was working perfectly.

It’s an interesting mental exercise to turn the whole game upside down: the problem is not how to free yourself from the mass level, how to get enlightened. The real question is: if you are a completely free and self-determined being, how did you lock yourself into a body to play games on the material plane? How did you get yourself and others to agree to this game? How did you get it to be compulsive?

Several times when I’ve spaced out, I flashed: Well, if it’s that easy to get out, I might as well go back and play the game. Maybe that’s the ultimate temptation. And maybe no one really wants to know how easy it is, nobody wants to upset the game. We may all be playing let’s pretend, hide-and-seek.

Physical reality is one of the biggest horror movies of all, and you know how we love horror movies. If the universe as we see it from our vibration level is illusory, only partially true, then that’s all the more reason for enjoying it and loving it, instead of getting freaked by it.

Everything that happens on earth can be experienced on any

of thousands of different vibration levels, from the most euphoric to the gloomiest. We are entirely free to emphasize any level we wish. We need change nothing but our own attention and love, our own expansion and love.

Since the universe is nothing but live beings, each controlling his own level and his own relationships, there is absolutely nothing in the universe that needs to be corrected in any way. We don’t have to do anything about it, whatever it is. There is consciousness everywhere in the universe, and we can trust all beings to handle their own decisions. No matter how it looks to us, love never loses control: the laws of our relations are as honest and exact as the laws of physics.

I can’t say I know at this moment what all these laws are. But on some level everybody knows that we are all getting exactly what we deserve.

The harmony is infinite and one and divine. Where do you figure you fit into it? Don’t be too hard on yourself. A little bit of love goes a long way.

The Agony & Ecstasy of Alexander Shulgin

by Mark Boal

Playboy magazine, March 2004

Prologue: The Invasion

Our story of the professor who gave the world ecstasy begins on the morning of June 2, 1994, in the hills above Berkeley, California, where Alexander Shulgin and his wife, Ann, were relaxing at home. At three minutes past nine, their tranquility was shattered by the roar of several police cars and a fire engine racing up their winding dirt driveway. Dozens of armed men and women jumped from the vehicles, their jackets marked SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, STATE NARCOTICS, DEA.

The officers proceeded to tear through the Shulgins' closets and drawers and then dug up the sump. Finally, in a backyard shed, behind a rusty padlock, they found what they were looking for: Inside the dim, musty interior they saw rows and rows of glass vials containing pristine white powders and faintly yellow liquids. It was a trove of illegal drugs—nearly all the psychedelics in the pharmacopoeia—more than enough to send the average dealer to prison on multiple life sentences. But Dr. Shulgin was not arrested, nor was he charged with any crime. Instead, after an interrogation that lasted eight hours, one of the federal agents pulled from his jacket a worn copy of one of Shulgin's books and sheepishly asked for his autograph. Shulgin signed it, "Sasha-good luck."

The invasion ended. Shulgin, the man who synthesized the compound known as MDMA and introduced it to a select group of medical professionals in the late 1970s, went back to work. "The government has what it wants," he told a conference of chemists soon after. "My laboratory will remain open." Shulgin may be a stealth revolutionary, but he is not a raver (he hasn't, it is safe to say, had a pacifier in his mouth since infancy). Nor is he a hippie or a New Age guru. In fact, Shulgin is a brilliant academic with a fistful of patents

and papers to his name, a former instructor at the University of California at Berkeley and a consultant for the National Institutes of Health, NASA and the Drug Enforcement Agency. He is a genial, cultured grandfather who adores Mozart and psychedelics—and has devoted his life to proving that that's not as loopy as it sounds.

So talented a chemist is Shulgin, and so desperate was the government for his knowledge, that for 20 years he possessed a rare license to manufacture any illegal drug. But while working for the DEA and presenting himself as a friend of law enforcement, he quietly carried on a double life, leading a tiny underground movement that continued the radical psychedelic research of the 1960s. After nearly achieving the movement's goal of establishing MDMA as a psychotherapeutic medicine, Shulgin suffered a crushing defeat in the mid-1980s when MDMA, by then known as ecstasy, became an illegal street drug. His reputation destroyed, he was exiled to the margins of his field, where he labored on in private, inventing a dazzling variety of psychedelic drugs.

By now Shulgin has created more than 100 molecules that produce altered states of consciousness, new ways of thinking, feeling and seeing—making him a kind of Einstein of pharmacology, if not one of the most influential scientists of his time. But even today his work is virtually unknown outside a select West Coast circle. At the age of 78 Shulgin is a ghost to history, mentioned only in passing in a few articles and missing from the scholarly drug books, the result of a careful, lifelong avoidance of the mainstream press as well as a dose of government suppression. But in an era when psychopharmacology is reassessing its past and future, Shulgin's legacy is far from decided. In fact, his influence is growing.

The True Believers

There is no university lab, no corner office in a glass hospital tower. The world's leading psychedelic chemist lives on a tumbledown property in the hills of Contra Costa County, in a ranch house sewn together from a patchwork of materials and sinking into the sandy soil. Nearby, a rickety red barn collapses in on itself by a pile of bricks

and a sun-bleached pickup. The air is dry and hot, but the plantings that border the house bloom in intense, vivid reds and lush, bursting greens. Mount Diablo, brown under a cloudless sky, rises in the distance.

Shulgin is a mammoth old man, standing six-foot-four. Dressed in a faded Hawaiian shirt, khaki shorts and sandals, with a gray beard coiled around a broad jaw and silken white hair shooting off his head in every direction, he looks like a hippie Santa Claus. His blue-green eyes appear youthful; they shine with pleasure at our meeting on this Fourth of July, 2003. Grasping my outstretched hand in both of his, he greets me warmly with a broad smile. "Welcome, friend," he says.

Shulgin has thrown together a barbecue on the crumbling stone patio behind the house, and he introduces me to his friends, who are clustered in groups under a stand of trees and a patio umbrella, away from the brutal sun. He finds Ann, who is short, plump, gray-haired, obviously once gorgeous, draped in beads and Indian cloth, holding a pack of Capri Slims. She hugs me with motherly tenderness. Then Shulgin bends down to whisper in her ear, and she bursts out laughing like a little girl. "Oh my, Sasha, you'd better not."

Twenty-four years ago on this day and on this very spot, he married her while his best friend, a high-ranking DEA official in charge of the agency's West Coast laboratories, served as minister. Ann and Sasha have one of the most unusual marriages on record, a union devoted to sex, drugs and the pursuit of advanced neurochemistry, which they've chronicled in two strange and enchanting books, *PIHKAL: A Chemical Love Story* and *TIHKAL: The Continuation*. (The titles are acronyms "Phenethylamines I Have Known and Loved" and "Tryptamines I Have Known and Loved.") These volumes not only contain the tales of two lifetimes' worth of psychedelic experiences but also include the recipes so that any good chemist can make Shulgin's drugs. On their kitchen table the Shulgins keep an index card inscribed with a quip from their old colleague Timothy Leary: "Psychedelic drugs inspire fear and panic in people who have never tried them."

Today's party is a typical Shulgin Fourth of July barbecue,

the kind he has been throwing for decades. Freshly slaughtered lamb is being grilled over coals, and a handpicked dandelion and-boysenberry salad is on the table. His guests are the usual crowd of Marin County progressives, upper-middle-class folkies with trimmed beards and Gore-Tex hiking shoes. They drive Subaru station wagons and eat organic food. Yet they are also fellow travelers in Shulgin's psychedelic revolution. That gentleman over there, flying high on peyote tea, his pupils reduced to pins, says he once supplied most of the West Coast's LSD. That bearded businessman covertly finances California's marijuana-buying clubs. The medical executive in shorts and a T-shirt has smuggled precursor chemicals for Shulgin. The state legislator, his face shaded by a broad-brimmed bush hat, has fought to keep Shulgin free.

"Sasha and Ann became the core around which the psychedelic community really cohered," says Rick Doblin, who has a doctorate from Harvard and is the head of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, a leading ecstasy advocacy group. "The Shulgins created the context for this whole community of people who really felt under attack in the wider culture." This elite community includes chairs of university departments, leading research scientists, an anthropologist, writers, M.D.'s, a research chemist and a wealthy entrepreneur. The most trusted among them are also members of Shulgin's "research group," a dozen or so volunteers who have met regularly for the past 30 years to be the first to road test hundreds of Shulgin's potent new drugs. Whenever he emerged from the lab clutching a promising variation of mescaline or LSD, Shulgin would gather the group and explain the basic chemistry and effects of his new molecule (for example, short, mild and emotional); then everyone would drink it down with a glass of juice and a notebook on hand to record the results while relaxing in some forest cabin, with a fire in the hearth and Bach on the five-channel home theater system.

These were effectively the drugs' first human trials, conducted outside the system of big science, without the red tape of a protocol from the Food and Drug Administration. Self testing gave Shulgin the freedom to work without restriction but at some cost to himself.

Over the years he has become violently ill, blacked out, lain shaking on the floor and felt his limbs freeze and his bones disintegrate. Still, he believes he is under an ethical imperative to sample his drugs before he gives them to anyone else—human or animal.

He invents new combinations routinely and names them as if they were children. Each inspires high hopes at birth, and though some have gone on to fulfill his dreams, several notable ones—such as ecstasy, 2CT7, 2CB and foxy methoxy—have slipped from his grasp and out to the street, where they’ve thrived as party drugs. Shulgin has many other babies with startling effects, which remain known only to connoisseurs. Their ultimate fate—as outlawed party favors or the radiant centers of a new age—lies beyond the master chemist’s reach.

For now it is easy to see that the party guests revere the man they call Sasha as they take turns approaching him for an audience. (He responds with deft one-liners: “I think you mean the methylated tryptamine”; “Oscar Wilde once said....”) Some of them are not afraid to share their respect with a reporter, like the man I meet by the buffet, a slim, bearded 50-something anesthesiologist in a black T-shirt. “I have so many questions for Sasha,” he says, between forkfuls of salad. “This year I wrote them all down.”

A few minutes later another bourgeois bohemian, wearing a faded tie-dyed shirt and a Breitling watch, asks for permission to videotape Shulgin working in the lab: “It would be so great just to get a few minutes, you know, of you working, because it’s so incredible what you do.” Shulgin nods. “Oh, yes,” he says, “wonderful things happen in there.” Then he touches the man fondly on the shoulder and waltzes away.

The Art of Chemistry

Psychedelics are the most pharmacologically complex compounds known, and in the 20th century the labs that have turned out new versions of them are few. They include the Sandoz Pharmaceutical laboratory in Vienna (LSD) and the lab in Alexander Shulgin’s home. Shulgin has been working from home since 1967,

when he walked away from corporate America after quitting a lucrative job at Dow Chemical to begin practicing his brand of alchemy. After nearly 40 years of combining his life with his chemistry, it is hard to tell where Shulgin’s home ends and his lab begins.

The dining room is a nook stuffed with photographs of the Shulgins with counterculture icons, along with psychedelic knickknacks such as a ceramic toadstool and drug posters from Amsterdam. This is where Shulgin brainstorms new molecular structures on a yellow legal pad, usually after a bottle or more of a syrah crafted to his taste by a true believer who owns a boutique winery (the bottle is labeled SHULGIN: Wild and Sassy). Then Shulgin will take a few steps, duck his enormous head under the door frame and enter a book-lined study to check his chemistry reference texts. If all goes well there, he heads outside and down a winding dirt path, overgrown with psychoactive plants and vines, that leads to the backyard shed, the “wet lab,” where he can lose himself for hours and where the real work gets done. It is a dark, loamy place, one step removed from a state of nature, with a dirt floor strewn with leaves. Ropy cobwebs hang from the ceiling to the floor (Shulgin believes it is immoral to kill spiders). The thick wooden tables, grooved and burned by acids, hold a few feet of plastic tubing, some vials and a Bunsen burner. Shulgin closes the door and sinks down onto a stool. “This is all I need,” he says expansively, gesturing to the low-tech equipment. “Everything I need.” He slides open a drawer full of shiny glass beakers and then runs his fingers lightly across them, as if he were touching a collection of the finest sterling silver. In a light, airy tone he explains that he has recently been working on cactus compounds, which he extracts by cutting the thorns with a nail clipper and pulping the plant in a blender.

He talks about his process. He orders pure serotonin, the chemical that many antidepressants boost to improve mood, from a chemistry supplier in Japan for about \$8 a gram. Speaking as if we were ensconced in a university lecture hall and not in a dank, cavelike shed, Shulgin explains that after honing the serotonin into a precursor to a psychedelic, he drives to a supply house where he loads 50 pounds of dry ice into the trunk of his Geo. Then he works for weeks, freezing

and boiling the molecule, adding acids and bases and then applying a myriad of intricate techniques until he finally brings the atoms to life. On most days Shulgin communes with his reagents and test tubes while the radio plays loudly. Like a jazz musician, he prizes spontaneity; in fact, his willingness to embrace the unexpected is undoubtedly the reason he has been so prolific. “I wonder what will happen if I put a thingamajig on this, take the doohickey down from there,” he says, pointing in the air, “and stick it here and make the molecule just a teensy bit heavier and larger. How will it fit in the receptor? Will it be too big? You don’t know.” Shulgin’s sentences move in unpredictable directions; you just try to follow the flight path and wait for one to land. “Chemistry is an art form,” he continues, his tone growing urgent and excited. “It has nothing to do with split atoms and molecules and mathematics and kinetics and all that nonsense. It’s an art form. It’s like writing a piece of music. It is pure imagination.” When Shulgin is alone in his lab, immersed in the rhythms of his work, his imagination always returns to the same mystery. It is the great unknown of biochemistry: the relationship between the shape and weight of a molecule and its effect on the mind, the so-called structure-activity relationship. “I was always interested in how, if you move one carbon atom, for example, on amphetamine, you can change it from being a strong stimulant to a psychedelic,” he says. “How is it that the difference of one atom produces such a dramatically different result in the human? The answer is, nobody knows.” If the atoms are tweaked again, the psychedelic can go from being a sparkling hallucinogen to a terrifying mindblower.

At the moment, Shulgin is working on a new psychedelic inspired by a compound he found in a cactus. He had seen a peculiar molecular structure in the cactus’s juice and had the idea to replicate the pattern and glue it onto an existing tryptamine (a class of molecules that includes many psychedelics and melatonin), thus combining a natural molecule with a synthetic one. Shulgin believes the result will be a dazzling new compound. “Nature didn’t know how to make it,” he says, smiling, “but I do.”

Like many members of the movement, Shulgin believes the psychedelic class of molecules holds promise as “insight” medicines

that can catalyze the process of psychotherapy. On a neurochemical level, psychedelics release the same mood modifiers—such as serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine—as many antidepressants. But in ways that are still not fully understood, they also evoke a response that is far more complex than that elicited by Prozac or Wellbutrin. They stimulate areas of the brain associated with ego modulation, spiritual experiences and detecting novelty, as well as hearing, smell and sight. At lower doses, one’s self-identity is retained, allowing for fresh, nonlinear thinking to trigger possibly important insights of self and of forgotten memories, or so the theory goes.

The American medical-pharmaceutical complex has embraced neither this idea nor Shulgin (in Europe his work has somewhat wider recognition). A few years ago, on an invitation from Dr. John Halpern, an associate director of Harvard’s Biological Psychiatry Laboratory and one of a handful of doctors who believe that psychedelic medicine has a promising future, Shulgin gave a lecture to the psychiatry faculty. “It was a disaster,” Halpern recalls. “He told this droll story about some doctor he gave psychedelics to, and you saw the residents in the audience turn white. But the older doctors in the front row, the dinosaurs of psychiatry who remember the 1950s, they were on the edge of their seats, lapping it up.”

Almost as fast as he can create them, Shulgin’s inventions have been declared illegal in America and around the world. Still, he takes the long view of history and believes that, in the end, the plasticity and variety of psychedelics will spark a new science of the mind. “I don’t think it will be from one of the current drugs,” he says. “Twenty, fifty years from now some kid will look at all of them and see an interesting thread in the pattern, and something will come from that. It’s like the invention of the wheel; you need the wheels and the axle to make a horse and buggy, and then down the line someone makes a sports car.” “The idea of developing Sasha’s stuff into medicines is a daunting task,” says Dr. Halpern. “It would take years and about a hundred million dollars to do the clinical studies on just one of his drugs, and he has hundreds of them. We don’t even have all the answers for LSD, let alone his stuff. So I think it will be decades before his work is really even looked at, maybe longer.”

The tour is over. There is nothing left to show me, because Shulgin will not work in the company of people he does not know. He doesn't even want a staff. "If I had junior chemists, it would be nice if they washed the dishes for me," he says, "but they'd really just be a kind of distraction."

He opens the door and ushers me out into the sunlight with a ceremonious wave of his hand. Then he bolts the lock and charges with long strides down the overgrown path, leaving me to follow behind. I think I am beginning to get a feel for when he's interested in talking, but as we near the house he looks back over his shoulder and quietly says, "It's a little bit sad, because I am not permitted to keep mementos of the things I make that become illegal." Then we're inside, and lunch is served.

All the Dark Places

Euphoria did not come naturally to Sasha Shulgin. Born in 1925 in Berkeley, he grew up in a somber household ruled by his father, Theodore, a Russian immigrant, and managed by his Midwestern mother, Henrietta, both of whom were high school teachers and strict disciplinarians. The Shulgins slept in separate bedrooms and would never hug or kiss in public. They forbade Sasha to visit girls; instead they taught him grim lessons in reality. Theodore Shulgin once left the carcass of the family dog to rot on the front porch so Sasha could observe the flesh as it slowly decayed and fell from the bone.

Shulgin took refuge in the basement. He would disappear down there for hours, thrilling to the dimness and the cobwebs, and go through all the fantastic junk that adults ignored. After exploring the sublevel in his own house, he proceeded to knock on neighbors' doors and ask to see their cellars, and then he branched out to tunnels and underground lairs of all kinds, becoming, he says, a "lover of dark places"—a lonely, introverted boy, wildly intelligent, searching for unbreakable solitude. "A psychologist with nothing better to do," he writes jauntily in *PIHKAL*, "could have a bit of fun with why, when I was older, I built three basements in my house."

His first basement chemistry set had only bicarbonate of soda and dilute acetic acid. He accumulated more powders and liquids and mixed them into messes that fizzed and changed colors. Chemistry became his thing, his outlet, and by the time he went to Harvard—on a full scholarship at 16—he was sufficiently advanced in it to use it to express himself. Intimidated by Ivy League regality, Shulgin conveyed his discomfort by allowing a gooey batch of mercuric acetelate to dry on his dorm windowsills. When it hardened, it exploded, sending shattered glass into the yard. "It was an accident," he says now, with an amused smile. "Just an experiment." Then he adds, as if to reassure me, "I replaced the windows."

When America entered World War II, Shulgin happily dropped out of Harvard and joined the Navy. In his ship's bunk he memorized a favorite chemistry textbook, and by the time the war was over he was prepared for a Ph.D. in biochemistry at Berkeley, followed by marriage (his first wife, Nina, died 30 years later) and a job at Dow Chemical. He immediately proved himself a wizard. Told to find a way to deal with the company's excess inventory, he scribbled a formula on the back of an envelope. "I told them, 'If you put a phosphate down here and put a carbonate up there, you have a physostigmine,'" he says. His supervisors asked what that was. Shulgin told them he was pretty sure it was the world's first biodegradable pesticide. Dow made a fortune on the pesticide (it spawned an entire line that is still in use), and as a reward Shulgin was given a lab and the freedom to do whatever he wanted. "So," he says, laughing, "I went into psychedelics."

The chemist became a convert after his first mescaline trip—on 400 milligrams, a massive dose. Emotional doors that had been locked his entire adult life swung open, and he felt showered with passion. "I saw a world that presented itself in several guises," he wrote. "It had a marvel of color that for me was without precedent.... I could see the intimate structure of a bee putting something in its sack on its hind leg to take to its hive, yet I was completely at peace with the bee's closeness to my face.... I had found my learning path."

Awed by his ability to be awed and left with "a burning desire to explain its profound action to myself and to the rest of mankind,"

Shulgin resolved to spend the rest of his career exploring psychedelics. Thus he would begin his double life, presenting himself as sympathetic to law enforcement, with low regard for street drugs but convinced that his beloved psychedelics were a “family that must stand apart.”

The Law of Unintended Consequences

Shulgin was not alone. The 1950s were a golden age in psychedelic studies. Aldous Huxley published *The Doors of Perception* and argued that mescaline could open an educated, sensitive mind to “love as the primary and fundamental cosmic fact.” Artists and intellectuals like Shulgin took to Huxley enthusiastically. In drawing rooms and Beverly Hills doctors’ offices, celebrities such as Cary Grant, Jack Nicholson and Esther Williams were experimenting, and Shulgin decided to join them with his own “mescaline studies.”

At the same time, psychedelics were all the rage in therapeutic circles. At the Boston Psychopathic Hospital, doctors were looking into a bewitching new chemical, LSD, as a means to “elicit release of repressed material” into consciousness (they also investigated LSD as a truth serum for the CIA). Hundreds of other LSD clinical trials were under way, sponsored by the National Institutes of Mental Health. “These people were in no sense cultural rebels,” says Dr. Lester Grinspoon, a noted Harvard University drug historian. “It’s a nearly forgotten chapter in American psychiatry.”

In the late 1960s, psychedelics—linked to Golden Gate Bridge suicides, Timothy Leary and the counterculture—became politically fraught, and scientific support for their study melted away. LSD was outlawed, and the FDA began denying research requests for LSD and mescaline, ending the prolific decade. Even chemists who had bet their careers on psychedelics moved on, but Shulgin never left his learning path, and he was soon the leading member of a once vibrant field.

He dealt with the FDA ban by making “designer drugs” that skirted the legal definition of a psychedelic. He described his new drugs in a steady stream of journal articles—such as “Role of 3,4-dimethoxyphenethylamin in Schizophrenia” in *Nature*—intended not

for a mass audience but to keep the scientific ball rolling in a time of government hostility. Dr. Charles Grob, director of the child psychiatry department at UCLA Hospital, says, “Sasha is a scientist, and he gave the studies credibility. He carried the torch. Because of that he may one day be perceived—rightly, I think—as the father of an entire field of psychedelic medicine.”

In 1967 Shulgin had his first brush with the unintended consequences of his imagination. An ultrapotent second generation analog of mescaline, a drug he called DOM, became known on the street as STP (serenity, tranquility, peace), and a drug epidemic tore through San Francisco. STP was sold in tabs that were four times stronger than the safe dose, and thousands of people who took it ended up in emergency rooms, hallucinating uncontrollably. “Maybe it became known from a seminar I gave at Johns Hopkins,” Shulgin wrote in his only public comment on the DOM disaster. “Maybe the patents had been read.”

On July 5 the Shulgins stay home to relax, recover and avoid the sun on a day when the heat rises from the earth in visible waves. Sasha and Ann do not have the means to install air-conditioning; he gets by on a small allowance from leasing land on his property (which his father bought in the 1930s) for a cell phone antenna, and along with his Social Security and his book sales (he distributes through Amazon.com) he makes enough to keep content. Ann, however, allows that she wouldn’t mind cash to repair the kitchen linoleum where it has worn down to the bare wood planks. “Sasha told me in the beginning that he never planned to make money from his inventions,” says Ann. “That was fine with me, but a little bit would be nice. It’s a very old house.”

Shulgin has already checked into the lab, having risen at seven in the morning, and when he meets me at the door he is wide awake and wearing his uniform: open shirt, shorts and sandals. These sandals—black custom-made jobs in the Birkenstock style—are practically stitched to Shulgin’s feet; they look like they haven’t been removed since the Summer of Love. He was wearing sandals on his wedding day and wore them with his tuxedo when he received a plaque from the Department of Justice (for his “significant personal

efforts to help eliminate drug abuse”), and he sure is wearing them today. Of course, he has a theory for footwear: “I discovered that fungus is unable to grow on my feet if I wear sandals.”

Ann is sitting in her usual chair by the screen door, looking perfectly at ease, smoking and fanning herself with a folded magazine. “Psychedelics are extraordinarily wonderful for another thing: lovemaking,” she says, abruptly yet casually. “You know, as you get older you find there is more than the penetrative, pounding type of sex. And you can have a spiritual experience making love.”

A low sound escapes my lips as I consider continuing the conversation, then decide I’m not that liberated. Reading PIHKAL and TIHKAL, I’d already come across several testimonies to the power of psychedelic sex. “The Bach was a moving thread of silver against a background of blue and orange,” begins a typical passage. “I opened my eyes for a second to see [his] head rising from the pillow as his body strained against the ropes.”

So it seems that Sasha and Ann are not simply married but delightfully married. Sasha has found his natural earth goddess, a bundle of loving energy he calls kiddo. As for Ann, she calls her husband her “big, beautiful man” or her “white haired magician.” She drops her voice, speaking with the cool precision she learned as a medical transcriber. “For months he is absorbed in cactuses, and there are cactuses lying all over the house,” she says. “Then he gets onto tryptamines, and I can tell you it’s damn impossible to get him to go back to the cactuses.” Her eyebrows arch. “What could be more exciting than constant change?”

It is an interesting question, given that one constant in the Shulgins’ lives has been their ingestion of massive amounts of psychedelic drugs, a total that easily numbers in the tens of thousands of trips. Feeling “disorientated” in Aachen, Germany, where they had gone to attend a conference on nuclear medicine, they took 30 milligrams of an “erotic enhancer” they called 2CB and made love in the hotel room. In Lourdes, France Ann explored caves under the sway of ecstasy. Back home they packed a mushroom analog Sasha had synthesized and visited so-called energy centers such as Death Valley. When Sasha asked Ann to move in with him, they were both

on LSD.

Sometimes, as in the case of Shulgin’s first brush with a high dose of a drug they call “the teacher,” a vigorous psychedelic that makes LSD look like a multivitamin, his journal records less than blissful reactions: “Am scared shitless...Am I catalytically fixed...? I see myself dying,” he wrote. He imagined himself as a very old man lying on the floor, his body wasting away to bone. But he refuses to linger on that awful image, with its echo of his childhood pet, dismissing it as a “nihilist illusion” and retreating to a discussion of the shape of the molecule. His most visionary experience was itself a reflection of his obsession with structure and form. He had swallowed some strongly hallucinogenic ALEPH compounds and was walking in his garden when he saw the hose tangled in a giant knot. In a blink, without thinking, he untangled it mentally. All at once he saw how to make the hose flat and straight. Just as easily, he could retangle it. “I thought, Is this bliss?” he says, the memory still vivid. “And right then I wanted to go inside to the dictionary and look up the definition of bliss.”

Sasha’s Second Drink

Shulgin did not immediately recognize that MDMA would change his life—and society. He initially thought it was no more nuanced than gin. After his first experience in the early 1970s—the compound had been buried in reference books since 1912 but never discussed as psychoactive—he described a “mild, pleasant intoxication.” It produced “free-flowing feelings” that he likened to “the second martini.” Believing he had indeed found a synthetic alternative to alcohol, Shulgin brought it to parties, holding up a little baggie of white powder he called “a low-calorie martini.” Testing among his research group, however, revealed the full range of warmth and euphoria of the MDMA high. Less cosmic and more personal than LSD, it evoked in most people feelings of empathy and self-acceptance rather than the sometimes bewildering encounter with infinity that is characteristic of acid. From the perspective of drug-assisted psychotherapy, it would be a safer choice than LSD, which was too

strong for the “drug-naïve.” Arriving on the scene as it did in the drug-tolerant atmosphere of the 1970s, a time when the Carter administration was talking openly about decriminalizing marijuana, MDMA seemed to Shulgin’s group to be a drug that could revive the spirited research of the 1950s. They lovingly nicknamed it “empathy” and thought of it as “penicillin for the soul.”

Shulgin started sharing his gentle new compound with people outside his research group; one person he gave it to was his friend and famous predecessor, the Austrian scientist Albert Hofmann, who is known for synthesizing LSD in 1938 (Hofmann also wanted to market LSD in low doses as an antidepressant). “They talked about this connection between atomic energy and psychedelic energy,” says Doblin, who was present for the session. “They felt that the chemicals were an antidote—through the development of consciousness—to handle the destructive energies.” After hours of this kind of conversation, Shulgin asked Hofmann what he thought of MDMA. Hofmann replied, “Finally, something I can do with my wife.”

By the late 1970s, a time of promise for the true believers, Shulgin’s establishment credentials were impeccable. He appeared at drug criminals’ trials and gave expert testimony for the prosecution. He didn’t mind helping the government put amphetamine or cocaine dealers in jail. Those drugs were “false in some way,” he says. “The sense of power they give is not real.” They were only marginally better than marijuana—in his opinion “a complete waste of time.”

He was also a lecturer at Berkeley, a consultant to the DEA and a member of the Bohemian Club, one of America’s most elite organizations. Every Republican president since Calvin Coolidge along with America’s top CEOs and media moguls has been a member of the all-male fraternity, which meets once a year for a secretive two-week bacchanal in the California redwoods. “Sasha is very intentional about his friendships,” says Doblin. “He has tripped out with those captains of industry. So if you want to know why he got raided and not arrested, I think that’s the answer.”

Shulgin staked his reputation on ecstasy, seeding it in a community of New Age and Jungian analysts on the West Coast while recruiting highly placed professionals he hoped would testify

for it when the inevitable confrontation with the government came. By the early 1980s an estimated 1,000 therapists were doing five-hour MDMA sessions with their patients.

Then, a hippie nightclub owner in Texas broke ranks and began selling it. He renamed MDMA ecstasy, beginning the rebranding that led to a giant criminal market for Shulgin’s drug. “Yeah, the first dealers came right out of the movement. They were a breakaway branch,” Doblin says. “But it could have been worse. We actually talked them out of marketing 2CB, another Sasha invention, which is much stronger and more psychedelic and really would not have been right for people to be taking in nightclubs.”

By the time the government announced plans to add ecstasy to the Controlled Substances Act, Shulgin and his circle were confident that they had laid the groundwork to keep it in the hands of doctors. “We were optimistic,” recalls Doblin. “It wasn’t as strong as LSD, so the abuse profile was better, and here you had this record of its being used in a therapeutic context.” On August 24, 1984 Shulgin wrote to his old friends at the DEA to say that MDMA, because of its “medical utility,” ought to be placed under the less restrictive Schedule III, so that research could continue and doctors could be permitted to prescribe it. “I have been in direct communication with perhaps a score of physicians who have become sufficiently impressed with the value and safety of MDMA to have built much of their psychiatric practice about its use,” he wrote.

After hearings that lasted two years and included mountains of testimony, the DEA’s chief administrative judge, Justice Francis Young, agreed that MDMA should be placed under Schedule III. But a month later the head of the DEA, John Lawn, a Reagan appointee, overruled his own judge and placed ecstasy under Schedule I. “It was the first clandestinely manufactured designer drug that got itself a lawyer and gathered so-called experts on the subject,” a DEA official later said.

Dr. Grinspoon, the Harvard drug historian, won a case against the DEA in federal court on the grounds that the administrator had improperly ignored MDMA’s medical potential. But Lawn rescheduled it under a new rationale, and this time the ban held. In

1986 Congress passed the Analog Act, which outlawed newly created drugs if they resembled the chemical structure of a scheduled drug. Two years later Shulgin tried to firm up his establishment credentials. He wrote *Controlled Substances: A Chemical and Legal Guide to Federal Drug Laws*, which became a standard reference for DEA officials. The book was too late, however, and Shulgin paid a heavy professional price for his advocacy. As ecstasy spread to raves and the headlines carried stories of drug overdoses, Shulgin's reputation plummeted. The DEA blacklisted him with chemical supply houses. "They can do that quite easily," he says. In the late 1980s Shulgin found that his papers were no longer being accepted for publication. "The journals started getting cold feet," says Ann. "There was this reluctance to continue to publish Sasha's work. I don't think anything was turned down, but little notes came from their lawyers saying, 'We don't know if we can keep on.' Deep down, the DEA wants us dead."

Cocooned in their Contra Costa hideaway as ecstasy burned through the national consciousness, Sasha began to see a future in which the knowledge of his other beloved molecules' existence died with him. In 1991 he decided his only option was to self-publish. "The only reason we published PIHKAL," says Ann, "is that the journals were unavailable." After self-publishing the book, with its recipes for making psychedelics, he sent it out with a cover letter to his friends in the DEA. "This might interest you," he wrote. It did. Three years later the government reached out from Washington and raided his house. What followed were allegations that Shulgin had violated the technical terms of his license, a case he settled by paying a \$25,000 fine—and surrendering his license.

Dr. Grob of UCLA, a supporter, says, "When MDMA was scheduled, it really crushed Sasha. I don't think he's ever recovered from the humiliation."

The Chemical Bond

Come afternoon, it is still sauna-hot in the hills, and the Shulgins are sitting on the patio, making the most of a pathetic breeze. On occasions like these, Shulgin is not without his black moods. "The association with mental health has not been particularly useful or fruitful," he admits, with sadness in his voice. He'll let you know in so many words that he—like the DEA—understands that when drugs react with the general public, chaos can ensue. "Most people who take psychedelics just want to have a fun Saturday night," he says. "They wouldn't dream of getting anything more than that." At one point he dismisses his life's work to me as making "baubles to put on the mantelpiece."

I want to know what the Shulgins think about MDMA's transformation into ecstasy and its devolution from medicine to club drug. Ann replies with a sigh, "Everybody asks about MDMA. It's really become quite annoying, actually, because, you know, for us ecstasy is sort of old news." After a few minutes I manage to ask Shulgin if he has anything to add. His normally cheerful visage darkens, and he retreats for a moment into silence. "It was very sad," he says at last, "very bitter." Then he turns back to me and smiles wearily. He is getting tired, he says, and politely excuses himself from the table.

Exiled by his government, shunned by the medical establishment and working alone in primitive conditions, Shulgin has never idled his scientific curiosity, nor has he given up hope. In 1992, two years before the DEA raid, there was another effort to see ecstasy rescheduled so that research could continue. At a review convened by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, expert witnesses testified that not enough was known about the compound's toxicity to justify clinical trials. Shulgin rose to speak. In his warm, kindly voice he corrected them, noting that, in fact, human trials had been conducted by the Alexander Shulgin Research Institute. He added that these trials had produced very satisfactory results, which he would happily make available to anyone. "Basically what he was saying was that he had illegally conducted this research and here was the result,"

says Doblin. “It was incredibly brave, and it totally changed the tenor of the meeting.”

Shulgin did not wait for the government to reconsider; in 1997 he and Ann published their second volume, TIHKAL: The Continuation, which lists more than a hundred new compounds that he had discovered and analyzed. He plans to publish again in the near future. Already, his last-ditch attempt is showing signs of having been ahead of its time. The most vocal critic of ecstasy, Dr. George Ricaurte, a Johns Hopkins scientist, has recently come under heavy fire for shoddy science. His studies, purporting to show that a single dose of ecstasy can burn a hole in brain tissue, are being repudiated as deeply flawed. At the same time, the FDA has approved clinical trials to administer ecstasy to post-traumatic stress disorder patients who are coping with anxiety.

For his part, Shulgin is no longer calling his compounds psychedelics. His latest molecules are better described as antidepressants, he says, and he has nothing left to do but continue to develop them.

Well after midnight on a recent evening, he gets into his Geo and drives down the mountain roads, past the Berkeley campus and over the bridge and the dark bay to a hospital near San Francisco. He is not thinking about ecstasy or any of the other drugs that have passed through his life and his body. As the world still grapples with his previous inventions, he forges forward. In the predawn hours, when the sky is lightening to pink and the hospital’s halls echo with his footsteps, Shulgin slips into a high-tech lab—he is friends, of course, with the doctor in charge. As always, he works by himself, surrounded by his potions and powders. And sometimes, when he’s lost in the bliss of creation, he’ll feel the atoms like living beings. Sure, it’s just carbon, hydrogen, matter and electricity, but it’s everything—everything—to a chemist alone in a laboratory at five A.M. willing to be awed.

Seven Phases of Social-Cultural Transformation Catalyzed by LSD and Psychedelics

by Ralph Metzner, Ph.D.

(This essay is based on a presentation at the MindStates IV conference May 23-25, Berkeley; a version was published in *Gaia Media News* in honor of the 60th anniversary of the discovery of LSD)

The first consciousness-expanding experience, triggered by LSD or another psychedelic (or by some other catalyst), often represents a significant transformative turning point in an individual’s life. Similarly, the introduction of psychedelics into Western culture in the mid-twentieth century catalyzed a series of profound socio-cultural transformational movements. These movements represent synchronistic expansions of consciousness in the collective psyche of humanity, with heightened awareness of new possibilities and commitment to creatively realizing them. As such, these transformative movements represent a response of the collective psyche of humanity to the combined evolutionary survival challenge posed by nuclear weaponry, environmental devastation and runaway population growth.

I propose to review the processes of cultural transformation triggered by the discovery of consciousness-expanding drugs from the point of view of G.I. Gurdjieff’s *Law of Seven*. This principle, which Gurdjieff stated is one of two fundamental cosmic laws (the other being *The Law of Three*), states that every process of transformation, at every level — individual, collective, planetary, cosmic, microcosmic — proceeds in seven stages, like a musical octave. At the points where in music there is a half-tone progression — *mi* to *fa* and *si* to the next *do*, there needs to be an *external shock* of some kind in order for the transformative process to continue unfolding—otherwise forces of degeneration and inertia bring about its collapse or diversion into other pathways. So here is my suggestion of how these seven phases have played out over the past seven decades.

1940s–Do. At the height of World War II, Albert Hofmann *discovers* (which is his term) LSD “accidentally”, a few months after Italian-American physicist Enrico Fermi succeeds in creating the first nuclear chain reaction, which leads to the making and explosion of the first atomic bombs. Thus, in the 1940s, we saw the simultaneous development of atomic energy and a psychactive drug that acts like a soft atomic explosion in the human mind, changing forever the worldview and basic life-orientation of all who experienced it. First applications of LSD in CIA and military experiments, psychotomimetic research, and psycholytic therapy.

1950s–Re. The decade of the 1950s saw the introduction into the culture of several mind-expanding plant-based shamanic spiritual movements. R. Gordon Wasson rediscovers the sacred mushroom ceremony of the ancient Aztecs, publishing his account in *Life* magazine in 1957. This triggers a movement in which tens of thousands North American and European hippies start experimenting with hallucinogenic mushrooms, at first wild and then also cultivated. The spread of hallucinogenic mushroom use and cultivation connects the psychedelic movement to age-old animistic, shamanistic traditions. Also in the 1950s a Brazilian rubber tapper starts a church (one of three) in which the Amazonian shamanic entheogen ayahuasca is the central sacrament, initiating a grass-roots religious revitalization movement that has thousands of adherents worldwide.

1960s–Mi. Experiences with psychedelic drugs (LSD, psilocybin) move out of the psychiatric clinics and laboratories. Timothy Leary and associates begin their research with psilocybin in “supportive settings” at Harvard University; and in 1963 publish *The Psychedelic Experience—A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Around the same time, in California, novelist Ken Kesey and his band of Merry Pranksters stage rock concert “acid tests”, in which thousands of people take LSD, while listening to music and watching light-shows. Thus was born a *revolution in collective consciousness*, in which hundreds of thousands of people, perhaps millions, had one or more profound, life-changing psychedelic experiences. Renowned

philosophers Aldous Huxley, Alan Watts, and Huston Smith testify to the authenticity of the religious/spiritual dimensions of psychedelic experience.

Synchronistically, the 1960s saw the beginnings of the environmental movement (Rachel Carson’s 1962 *Silent Spring* was a major catalyst); the civil rights, anti-discrimination movement, inspired by Martin Luther King; the anti-war movement, galvanized by the televised horrors of Vietnam; the women’s liberation movement, with its “consciousness-raising” circles (Betty Friedan’s 1963 *The Feminine Mystique* was a major catalyst); an upsurge of creative innovation in music, the arts, fashion and literature; the “sexual revolution” and increased freedom of sexual expression, catalyzed in part by the contraceptive pill. Even though there is no evidence of a causative connection between ingestion of psychedelics and these transformation movements, each of them represents an expansion of consciousness, a transcending of the existing limited conventions, attitudes and norms. Together, they constitute what was justly called a *counterculture*.

The shock: The assassinations of John F. Kennedy (1963), Martin Luther King (1968) and Robert Kennedy (1968). The humiliating defeat of the United States in Vietnam.

1970s–Fa. The effect of the shock on the “movement” (of consciousness expansion) is to induce profound soul-searching and retreat from overt political activism. For mainstream culture, the use of psychedelics becomes a minor footnote in the War on Drugs, which swings into higher and higher gear in the Nixon and Reagan years. Marijuana is, and remains, in the middle and hotly contested ground: life-saving and mind-assisting medicine for millions, taboo issue for the political class. Inner consciousness-development movements of all kinds – Asian yoga and meditation systems, new forms of transpersonal experiential psychotherapy, New Age spiritual practices, neo-shamanic and neo-pagan interests are cultivated and become academically respectable.

1980s–Sol. All the transformative social movements that began in the 1960s continue to thrive, deepen, diversify and develop, reaching into all sectors of society: varieties of environmental/ecological perspectives, such as deep ecology; varieties of feminist, civil rights and social justice movements; transpersonal and ecumenical approaches to religion and spirituality. The rise of AIDS puts a corrective brake on the sometimes reckless exuberance of the sexual revolution. The spread of cocaine and crack cocaine intensifies the drug war, with its rampant abuse and corruption of civil liberties, and incalculable profits for international criminal drug cartels as well as the money-laundering financial systems of the aboveground economies of many countries, including the US. Use of the classical psychedelics remains almost invisibly underground. Alexander Shulgin creates MDMA, the first of many phenethylamine empathogens, used as a valuable adjunct to psychotherapy. It spreads from the couch to the street, becomes demonized and illegal. Rave parties of thousands, involving Ecstasy, begin in England, spread to the US and around the world.

The new Dionysian revels spread throughout the suburban middle-classes as well as youth culture. Mushroom culture and ayahuasca religions continue to spread internationally.

1990s–La. The Soviet empire collapses, leaving the US as the “sole superpower”, increasingly nakedly dedicated to economic and military imperialism around the globe. The dizzying rise and spread of the internet fosters global interconnectivity in every area of life, from crime and commerce to science, education, information (including information about drugs) and activist solidarity. Multinational corporations foster economic hegemonic globalization. Growing global and public awareness of the multiple mounting global environmental disasters (climate change, species extinction, overpopulation, pollution, deforestation, exhaustion of resources) loom ever larger. Prohibitionist Drug War policies continue, defying logic, justice and common sense. The psychedelic underground continues, becomes more knowledgeable, with clear intentionality toward healing, therapeutic and spiritual values. Shamanic practices,

work with animal, plant and spirit allies, herbal and natural medicine, organic farming and nutrition –all expand vigorously. New more conscious, non-medical approaches to birth and birthing, and death and dying, gain more adherents. A living systems worldview emerges in philosophical scientific circles.

2000s–Si. With the election of George W. Bush, in a Supreme Court *coup d’État* (not unlike Hitler’s legal accession to power in 1932) the ambitions of world domination, the *Imperium Americanum*, stand ever more clearly revealed. *Fascism internally, imperialism externally.* “Democracy” becomes a smoke-screen cover word for militarism, “free trade” a smoke-screen cover word for neo-colonialist exploitation. International arms control and environmental treaties and institutions are abandoned with hardly a murmur of dissent or opposition from Congress or the media. The most progressive economic and political activities occur outside of the US: in Europe, some parts of Asia, some parts of Latin America. Then comes:

The second shock: Sept. 11, 2001. The attack on the World Trade Towers.

In the aftermath, the dominant direction – imperialist domination and corporate globalization – is intensified by vengeful and pre-emptive militarism. As Hitler used the Reichstag burning, the US government now uses two so-called wars – on Drugs and on Terrorism – to fuel fear in the population and establish a police “security” state. As of 2003, the United States has turned itself into a loathed pariah in the international community, ridiculed for its stupendous ignorance and arrogance and feared only because its hand is on unparalleled military destructive power and its seeming determination to use it.

Whether the external shock, like those in the 1960s, will have the effect of ultimately strengthening the movements of consciousness transformation remains to be seen. For the individual, at this point, the aims and practices of spiritual development and the demands and needs of the larger society and world seem to be coinciding, since the ordinary political means of stopping the juggernaut of pre-emptive wars seem ineffective.

In the high-stakes cosmic game of planetary catastrophe, the Earth has one (or more) trump cards: ecological disasters could occur on such a scale that it would force the diversion of all technological and financial resources to address them. I confess to sometimes wishing it might happen thus. On the other hand we cannot wait or hope for this card to be played.

The internet is a wild card—that can amplify all other plays, and create unexpected opportunities and openings for progressives and activists.

Those of us that are more interested in the preservation of life in all its astonishing diversity and beauty, than in the enlargement of personal or group power and wealth, have only the same resources we've always had: the capacity to move (and help each other move) into expanded, awakened consciousness; the purity and strength of our intention; and the courage and creativity to realize the vision that, in the motto of the 50,000 at the Porto Alegre World Social Forum meetings, *another world is possible*.

The Withering Away of the Revolution by Robert Hunter

Chapter 10 of *The Storming of the Mind*
McClelland and Stewart Limited, copyright 1971 Robert Hunter

To speak of a self-structuring hierarchical jump is to speak of a revolution, a fundamental change in the way our affairs are conducted. Without such a change, the overwhelming likelihood is that we will kill ourselves off. No one suggests that men be put in charge of nuclear reactors who are only capable of “muddling through.” Yet exactly such a suggestion is made when it comes to putting people in charge of the dynamic institutions which determine the course of society. The question is not whether a revolution is needed. The question is: How can it succeed? Where are the lines of least resistance? What are the weapons at the disposal of the new consciousness? Are these weapons being picked up? Is some sort of an apocalyptic bloodbath—the “shit storm” foreseen by Norman Mailer—inevitable?

In the past, in virtually every case, it was. Is there any good reason for believing that conditions have changed in some mysterious way? That a true revolution can now be effected without the streets being littered with bodies?

First, in order to get some sort of a perspective, let us consider the odds *against* a successful revolution. So long as we stick to the traditional definition of a revolution, the odds seem formidable, more formidable perhaps than they have ever been in the past. An impression of the sheer power of the existing power structure, particularly in America, might best be conveyed through the lens of personal experience:

PEACE,
NOW!
PEACE, NOW!
PEACE, NOW!

It was as though the great buildings around us were hi-fi speakers in the land of the giants with the volume on full. The vibrations beat against the 162-ton Picasso sculpture, reverberating along the Cor-ten weatherproofed steel walls of the thirty-one-story Chicago Civic Plaza, a sound that had several dimensions: anger, frenzy, fun, frustration, fear, surprise. It was therapeutic, as raw as the first roar of a timid man who has discovered the heroic within his grasp. It was defiant and exultant because the sound was composed of ten thousand voices and each voice suggested the liberation of a ninety-pound weakling who has completed his Charles Atlas course and is now moving with a growl down onto the bully-inhabited beach. And then it was also pure rooting-for-the-home-team stuff, complete with cheerleaders:

What do we want?

PEACE!

When do we want it?

NOW!

And, finally, it was frightening. “PEACE, *NOW!* PEACE, *NOW!*” The sound was blurred, like the noises of waves, and it was easy to close your eyes, let go of the mood for a moment, and hear them chanting, “SIEG *HEIL!* SIEG *HEIL!*” There was that hypnotic rhythm to it, a pace close to that of goose-stepping hordes. This was October 15, 1969, the First Moratorium Day. The word was already out that the United States this day had lurched like an elephant slammed by a hand grenade under the impact of the biggest anti-war demonstration in history. And it was only a month since the Woodstock music festival had gone off like a land mine.

Now the speeches were done with, the Chicago Six—looking pale and if not self-conscious, at least a bit uncertain—have been duly honored, every angle has been played except the last: time for a moment’s silence for the dead in Vietnam. Heads were bowed. Even the traffic was stilled, the crowd having become so large the streets around the Civic Plaza were sealed off. The swelling silence engulfed the murmuring, and soon we were as quiet as ants, a colony of ants

amid a warehouse display of fridge-like buildings and stacks of rusting canned goods; there was even an altar before us—the First Methodist Church, the world’s tallest place of worship. The silence soon matched the height of the building. After a few seconds, hands started fluttering up, making the V-sign of peace, a gesture by now as religious as the Catholic sign of the cross. Soon almost all the hands were raised in the V-sign, except for those hands which were black, and all those black hands, thousands, were making the clenched-fist Black Power salute. I saw no black fingers making the peace sign. Something had happened....

The demonstration was over. But the crowd was not quite prepared to dissolve. And now came the cry: OINK! OINK! It was the warning and battle-cry. It meant the riot cops were moving. Over the heads around me, bobbing like bubbles in a stirred-up bathtub, I could see a blue tide coming—a line of robin’s egg riot helmets. The warning, almost a wave-action, had passed through me a second before, an impulse transmitted from nerve to nerve, body to body, thus flashing from one end of the plaza to the other, communicating to nearly ten thousand of us in seconds what would have taken several minutes to pass on by word of mouth—a flicker of tension, excitement and fear. Briefly, my sense of isolation, of self, of individuality, *cracked*. I was a small unit in a larger creature, one spark in the total field laid down by a brain composed of ten thousand such sparks. And the brain is stupid, composed of too few parts—it has not much more going for it than an insect (no metaphor is intended here—a crowd is a gestalt, and its currents work like magnetism on the ciphers of our “identities,” creating whirlpools and flood streams where none existed before).

OINK! OINK! screamed thousands of voices.

The effect of the cry was to cauterize some of the automatic fear which had been in the message of a few seconds before. Shout cops and the impulse, maybe nothing more than the Pavlovian reaction of children caught stealing apples, is nevertheless to run. Shout OINK! OINK! and the impulse is to press forward to the edge of the trough. Good mob psychology to change the object of terror into an object of contempt.

The movement of the crowd was like water toward a cliff. The robin's egg helmets might as well have been magnets attracting chips—but of course the police knew this, knew by now after years of riots and demonstrations all about the psychology of mobs. It is a psychology not so different from that of rats or very retarded children. Knowing it, the police had purpose in their movement. They were good cowboys. The round-up began. They were pulling us into a new position, the better to control us.

The round-up was underway. I tried to hang back close to the Picasso sculpture, rising like a giant steel bat over the plaza. Tried to hang back. It didn't work. The surge of the crowd was too strong, and too much of its deep herd impulse had gotten into my head—like a primordial gorilla hand groping for the controls. I did not fight as hard as I might to avoid being carried forward and, first thing I knew, I was right up against the police line.

Easy to imagine that these cops gave off no odor. They were, in fact, as odorless as astronauts or the hostesses at Disneyland and the Playboy Club. The cop in front of me, looking by chance into my eyes no more curiously than you would look into the eyes of a passing dog, seemed like a steel robot, a big one, wearing a rubber mask over a transistorized brain. His truncheon was at least two and a half feet long. When the walkie-talkie order hit that transistor of his, he would bash my face in as automatically as an electronic door opening to let customers into a supermarket.

Now I could see the purpose to the movement of the police. They had taken up positions at one end of the glass-walled civic plaza, and the reaction of the crowd was not, after all, so unanimous. Only a fragment—the most hopped-up elements—had been drawn out, or, more precisely, *extracted*. So this was a dental operation. The police knew now where the trouble would come from. By their carefully-drilled movements, they had isolated the militants from their buffer of tax-paying citizens. These Chicago police were a good modern army. Beyond doubt their choreographer was sitting up in one of the skyscrapers, directing the performance like a man cutting a cake with sure strokes of his blue-edged knife.

And the crowd—the crowd was still a dull-witted gestalt. Part

puppy-dog, part wolf. But in the end, manageable, more manageable than a baby. The police, having drawn the most dangerous part of it into position, (having snagged the fangs) now kept it on the line like a fisherman jerking his line to make sure the hook is in place. This was done simply by moving the police line a few dozen yards to the right, a few dozen to the left. The crowd followed. Meanwhile, as anticipated in somebody's calculations, the majority of the original ten thousand demonstrators had dissolved back into the rush-hour traffic, and soon there were fewer than one thousand left chanting and singing in front of the police line. After a while, they decided to head over to the federal building, where a few hundred others, many of them young blacks, and Black Panthers, had gathered to make speeches and throw insults (nothing more) up at the courtroom where the charade of the trial of the Chicago Six was in progress. The police line followed the demonstrators. From the federal building, the movement was back toward of the plaza, then over to Lincoln Park. All along the way, police marched silently, shoulder-to-shoulder with the demonstrators. At last we arrived at the park. It was late afternoon, and the potent force of ten thousand had been whittled by the blue knife down to less than a hundred. The skill in that whittling was at least equal to the talent employed in the carving of totem poles. The police had a very effective machine going for them.

Yet there, in Chicago, I was watching the functioning of a police machine which was still only a primitive tool compared to the computerized techno-structured operations now coming into existence. The difference between this Chicago police machine and those modern ones beginning to take shape everywhere is a matter of centuries compressed into decades. Compare a knife to a laser beam. You can at least see the knife coming. Against the laser beam you have no chance at all.

Police machines, even the machines of Hitler and Stalin, were clumsy, forced to resort to terrorism and brute force. It has been shown that slave labor is poorly adapted to industrialization and adapted to post-industrialization not at all. The new machineries of police control are as far removed, in their most highly-developed forms, from Nazi Germany as helicopters from Icarus. The efficiency

of the Chicago police on the occasion of the First Vietnam Moratorium revealed more about their state of development than did the police riot during the 1968 Democratic Convention. There, while the whole world was watching, the police broke their ranks and the machine sputtered to a halt. Under those circumstances, had the Chicago police been faced by well-armed, well-drilled opponents, they would have been cut to ribbons. As it was, they were chasing children, attacking journalists and bystanders, and so they seemed to have tremendous brute power. It was an illusion. In fact, at that particular moment, the Chicago police were at their weakest. If the Democratic Convention riots of 1968 had been the real measure of the effectiveness of the Chicago police, then the Black Panthers could be certain of victory. When the police become a mob, they are as helpless against precision attack as that crowd on Moratorium Day was against precision control. And yet the point here is that those chillingly-efficient Moratorium Day police tactics were relatively unsophisticated. The blue knife that worked so well was still not a laser beam. In the very near future, control of mobs of ten thousand will be child's play.

The mass media have communicated a false message to the younger generation: Look at the Democratic Convention! Look at Watts! Look at the cities that burned as funeral pyres in the wake of Martin Luther King's assassination! Remember the night when a tiny gadget near Niagara Falls broke down and all of New York was plunged into darkness? See how easy it is to throw a monkey wrench into the functionings of a modern industrial state? A bit of LSD in the water supply, a few snipers moving along the rooftops, a demonstration here, a reversal of a court decision concerning marijuana there...so easy, so easy.

Yet one has only to walk through Watts, or along West Madison, or through Harlem, to realize that probably fewer than a hundred miles of streets out of all the millions of miles of paved roadway in the United States actually were touched by flame the night after King died. And nothing has changed in New York because of the black-out, except that the hydro system is slightly more efficient now. LSD breaks down in water. As for snipers—they are killed, and

have about as much chance of beating the existing system as a fly has of wresting power from the man with the fly-swatter. An overturned pot law can be planted back even more firmly on its feet a few weeks later. Guerrilla warfare? One might try reading *Quotations From Chairman Mao Tse-tung*, especially his ten principles of operation. In the context of modern America, it might well have been written by George Wallace. Point One: Attack dispersed, isolated enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces (*universities?*) later. Point Two: Take small and medium cities and extensive rural areas first; take big cities later. Etc. It should be obvious to everyone that guerrillas can only operate if the population supports them, and there is no advanced industrial nation today where that basic condition exists. A mass base is completely lacking for a *putsch* or revolution in the old style of the French and Russian revolutions. And even if it weren't, in order to beat the technological and organizational opposition, the revolutionaries would have to forge a faster, more powerful machine. To fight a revolution in an advanced industrial nation today (on its own ground, in short) one would have to become even better at the game than those who currently wield the blue knife and the laser beam.

The argument against revolution in an advanced industrial nation, in the old sense of a violent overthrow of the existing power structure through the mechanism of an armed insurrection, proceeds along three lines:

- A. It's hopeless.
- B. It accomplishes nothing, except a changing of the guard.
- C. It diverts us from the real struggle, which is to attain a higher level of consciousness, and to explore our potential (which is still unknown).

Let us deal with these in turn:

A. It's hopeless.

The working class of late has not shown itself to be particularly responsive to the rhetoric of the New Left. The evidence would suggest that any insurrection at this stage in the affairs of the American state is more likely to come from the right. Movements such as Yippie!, the Black Panther Party, SDS, and so on have proven to be shorter-lived and far less tolerated than the Minutemen or the Ku Klux Klan. This is not simply because of the raw power of the police machine.

John Galbraith has pointed out that when capital was the key to economic success, social conflict was between the rich and the poor. But in recent times, education became the difference that divides. "Politics," he writes, "reflect the new division. In the United States suspicion or resentment is no longer directed to the capitalists or the merely rich. It is the intellectuals who are eyed with misgiving and alarm. This should surprise no one. Nor should it be a matter for surprise when semi-literate millionaires turn up leading or financing the ignorant in struggle against the intellectually privileged and content. This reflects the relevant class distinction of our time." It is a distinction few intellectuals are willing to accept. Humanists and socialists alike would prefer to steer away from any position which might open them up to charges of elitism, yet everything points to a sharp (and widening) cleavage not only between the generations but between the new basic classes. Students can no longer appeal to the workers with much hope of being listened to (or, for that matter, of getting out of a union hall meeting without having their heads beaten in).

Add to that the fact that the very "masses" upon whom all organized revolutionaries pin their long range hopes are the people (in the highly industrialized states) who are the least likely to rise up against anybody except the revolutionaries themselves. Come the revolution, we will all be listening to Bob Hope. The problem in part is that only a minority of the population in any advanced industrialized nation is responsive to the new and accelerated pace of change. A few, among them many of the young and many of the intellectually privileged and content, are in tune with the new culture; that is,

change is not something that frightens them. Mobility offers possibilities, not dread of being uprooted. The "broad masses," on the other hand, are still peeking out at the world from around the corner of their memories of the Depression and the Second World War.

Few will dispute that the guns and the tanks and the bombs and the advertising agencies and the mass media are in the hands of the established order. The target of any revolution cannot just be the White House, the Pentagon, and Fort Knox. It must be, let's say, "the hearts and minds of the people," whether Vietnamese or American. And these, at the moment, are largely under the control of the establishment press, the advertisers, and the politicians. So, already, the revolution must move against an enemy that commands the heights and is dug in everywhere, who, furthermore, has overwhelming firepower, with air and ground and naval support. And the odds are not yet through being added up. The establishment also has at its disposal a humming army of computers, an array of prototypal technostuctures whose function is not only to anticipate trouble, pin-point likely danger spots, but, as a regular day-to-day operation, keep a closer eye on every individual citizen than could be done in any previous society. There is no one in America—or any advanced industrial state, for that matter—whose identity is not magnetically recorded on a tape somewhere. So, in addition to the overwhelming firepower of the enemy, the revolutionary faces the dangers of bugging, wiretapping, computerized surveillance, and so on.

So far, however, we have been ticking off the obvious. We have not really got the *real* strength of the enemy, which is that, unlike a banana republic, the modern industrial state is not run by a strongman flanked by bullyboys, a division of armored jeeps, and financed by a clutch of businessmen with vested interests in keeping wages down. It may indeed stem from just such a basic structure, but in the process of its evolution it has become too complex, too bottomless, to be tackled as though it *remained* nothing more than that. The power of the industrial state is greater by several factors, and not just in terms of physical might.

Where we see progressiveness and openly liberal attitudes,

we see the technological reality refining its methods of manipulation, organization, and, ultimately, control. It gets *better* at it all the time, absorbing more, spreading out in ever-widening circles, and turning every attack to its own advantage, simply by accepting the attacker, swallowing him, and thus very nearly literally feeding on opposition.

Historically, it has been hard enough to get broad masses of people to bite the hand that *wouldn't* feed them; to hope, under conditions of affluence, to get those same broad masses to bite a hand that does feed them—and feeds them very well—is a thin hope indeed. Add this stark reality to the problems already mentioned, and one begins to see that it would have to be one hell of a super-revolution, the one which could smash the technological society.

Even if the odds weren't so bad, consider the state the troops are in. What happened to the crowd in the Chicago Civic Plaza on Moratorium Day demonstrated clearly where the real organizational muscle was. But there is more to it. Shortly before Moratorium Day, I was in Berkeley, at the University of California campus. Listen to one of the most radical students I talked to: "It's ready to blow, man. There's a revolution coming. It's overcrowded here. Construction everywhere. Bad food. Lousy accommodation. It's mean. Bad vibrations. Everybody's really uptight, only it's low-level uptightness. People are bugged, I mean, really bugged... the food prices, the shortage of rooms, the noise... it's gonna go, man. Wow." So there is a revolution about to erupt. But follow the conversation further. It drifts. Soon, the student is talking about the intensity of the mescaline experience as compared to the hashish experience. A lot of quibbling gets going with other students present about the virtues of hash. And from there the conversation proceeds directly to the issue of the best places to go skiing. One place is generally conceded to be much better than the others, because "dampness from the ground soaks right up through your head and goes raining off in reverse right into the sky from your head, all those pores in your scalp, like they were sprinklers, man." This is, if you have been smoking hash. Somehow, no contradiction is seen between the desire to have a revolution and the desire to smoke hash and go skiing. The revolutionary fever was heavily

seasoned with hedonism, which weakens it badly. And most conversations I got into on the campus seemed spiced in much the same way. A friend reports meeting two radicals at Berkeley, whose position is simple: Everything will have to be smashed from stem to stern; America has become that diseased. The conversation ends when they ask my friend if he would like to blow a joint. Okay. They go down the street and climb into a brand-new Thunderbird, property of the most talkative radical and proceed to get stoned.

The story may be apocryphal, but not very.

Yet, through a process of nothing much more than elimination, we have arrived at a position where the vanguard of a revolution *must* be the "alienated" young. The working class has become reactionary (labor and management may quibble over the spoils, but none seeks to blow up the trough), the bourgeoisie middle class are more dominant than ever, the poor are already contained in ghettos which are concentration camps lacking only barbed wire. Let us look, therefore, at the picture these alienated young presented as the 1960s drew to a close. Here is Barry Farrell's description of the last two nights of the Woodstock festival:

As night fell the scene became more dramatic still, disclosing a loud electric image of the future. From the fringes of the crowd, the stage looked like a pearl at the bottom of a pond, a circle of light fired down from towers as big as missile gantries. Just beyond it, helicopters fluttered in and out of an LZ ringed with Christmas lights, bringing in the rock groups, evacuating casualties and stars. Much music was lost under the beat of their blades—an annoyance until it was perceived as a higher music than rock alone—as rock-helicopter music, space music to accompany the sound-and-light vision of the American '70s.

The speaker's expert voice purred across the breadth of the farm, reading off lists of the injured and ill, urging respect for the fences. In the newspeak of our age, he praised the crowd for being groovy, cautioning them not to blow the cool thing they had going by breaking any of the rules. Then he would give way to another group, and the musicians would appear, tiny forms bathed in lurid light.

On the festival's last night, when the field had turned to slime

and abandoned sleeping bags lay sprawled underfoot like corpses, my feelings for the event began to darken. Everyone around me was shivering under soaked coats and blankets. Their bonfires, fed with newspapers and milk cartons, cast up a stench that hung above the meadow in a yellow haze. On the dark roads, unseen faces whispered the names of drugs to passing strangers. Mescaline? Hash? At the central crossroads, anxious voices shouted the names of lost friends. Gloria! Donald!

The great stoned rock show had worked a counter-miracle, trading on the freedom to get stoned, transforming it into a force that tamed the crowd and extracted its compliance. Not that anyone minded, of course—the freedom to get stoned was all the freedom they wanted. And, being stoned, everyone was content to sit in the mud and feed on a merchandised version of the culture they created. In the cold acid light, the spoiled field took on the aspect of an Orwellian concentration camp stocked with drugs and music and staffed with charming police. The speaker's coaxing voice only enriched the nightmare, which became complete when I asked a trembling blue-faced boy if he was feeling all right. "Groovy," he said, adding a frozen smile.

The Woodstock festival has already been recorded as a victory for music and peace, and that is as it should be. But it should also be remembered as a display of the authority of drugs over a whole generation—an authority already being merchandised, exploited, promoted. It was groovy, as the speaker kept saying, but I fear it will grow groovier in memory, when the market in madness leads on to shows we'd rather not see.

As for *Hair*, one had only to glance at the faces in the lobby at intermission to see that these were not people about to take to the barricades. Flushed, excited faces, titillated. After all, hadn't they just had their jollies by becoming involved enough to cheer all the heavy anti-draft lines, the pro-pot lines, the ecstatic lyrics about beauty and truth? They got it out of them, all right. Now they will go home feeling liberated, some of them so liberated they will not even worry about how tired they're going to feel in the morning when it comes time to go back to work for The Machine.

Hair was only incidentally a piece of show biz. Its real

significance lies in the fact that its arrival (along with the effective total collapse of censorship, the popularity of pot, the sudden militancy of every minority group, and the rediscovery of holism) signaled the beginning of a new stage in the affairs of the technological society. *Hair* was the death-knell of revolution, ringing joyously and ecstatically through the industrialized world. Then along came Woodstock, and as Barry Farrell wrote in *Life*, "no one there doubted that we were crossing a cultural Rubicon." The question is: How many realized that they had entered the gates of the comfortable concentration camp? The trap had begun to close. The barricades, like the guillotine, were suddenly relics of the past. As that small slice of humanity which represents the cutting edge of our evolution rushed forward to meet the dawn of the Age of Aquarius, they left their machine-guns and ideologies and programs behind. Straitjackets were shedded like old skins. We had begun to give up. What every pessimistic modern philosopher from Huxley to Jacques Ellul had warned us against was finally happening. We were losing control of our destiny, losing our minds, throwing down our weapons and surrendering in droves. We had stopped fighting. Hegel's historical man, whose spirit was in "a mighty conflict with itself," who could advance to higher forms only by overcoming himself, was suddenly as obsolete and pathetic as the Priest King of Nemi, who could succeed to office only by slaying the incumbent, and having slain him, retained power only until he himself was slain, with the result that "year in year out, in summer and winter, in fair weather and in foul, he had to keep his lonely watch, (sword in hand, pacing around the tree that was his throne) and whenever he snatched a troubled slumber it was at the peril of his life."

Revolution, whose death-convulsions had taken the form of student revolts in the fallopian tubes of the technological society, is finally finished as the vehicle of human advance. And since revolution really means cyclic recurrence, (a vicious circle) we do not have to bemoan, as Marcuse does, the "passing of historical forces" which seemed, at earlier stages, to represent the possibility of change. There is no political institution left on the face of the earth whose ideology is not basically technological, so all a revolution hitched to realpolitik

can offer now is more of the same. Revolution is giving way to liberation and short-circuiting the vicious circle entirely. If *Hair* and Woodstock signal the triumph of the technological society, they also signal the end to futile and self-perpetuating conflict.

The *Hair* and Woodstock phenomena are complex, like the flight of Apollo 11; the question has to be asked: What is the effect? Do these phenomena liberate or do they add a deeper dimension, a new twist, to the elaborate and subtle mechanisms of aggregate control? The immediate problem with *Hair* is that its emergence—or the emergence of some immensely popular show employing exactly the same devices of protest, outrage, anger, obscenity and revolutionary rhetoric—was anticipated as far back as the 1950s by French philosopher Jacques Ellul, who argued that the more restrictive the social mechanism, the more exaggerated are the associated ecstatic phenomena. (Neither *Hair* nor Woodstock could be described as other than ecstatic.) “Technique,” wrote Ellul, “encourages and enables the individual to express his ecstatic reactions in a way never before possible. He can express criticism of his culture, and even loathing. He is permitted to propose the maddest solutions. The great law here is that all things are necessary to make a society and even revolt is necessary to make a technical society.” *Hair*, which expresses plenty of loathing and not a few mad solutions, is tolerated (along with pornography, obscenity, and even, to an increasing degree, pot and homosexuality) not because there is more freedom than before, but because the expression of criticism allows people to let off steam. And having let off steam they are less likely to get serious about changing the social order.

Marcuse has a word for it: “repressive de-sublimation,” which is the “release of sexuality in modes and forms which reduce and weaken erotic energy.” (Erotic energy being the source of real rebellion as opposed to burlesques.) In tolerating a show like *Hair* or a happening like Woodstock, the technocratic order would be doing nothing less than moving into the realm of “pleasant forms of social control and cohesion.” The thrust of the argument is that pleasant forms of control work more effectively than repression. Thus, there is the appearance of rebellion, but no substance. As Ellul puts it:

“Technique defuses the revolt of the few and thus appeases the need of the millions for revolt.”

B. It accomplishes nothing, except a changing of the guard.

Leonard Cohen remarked in 1968, when asked if there was a revolution going on: “Of course it’s a revolution. But I want to see the *real* revolution. I don’t want it siphoned off by the mobilization people. It’s got to take place in every room. Revolutionaries, in their heart of hearts, are excited by the tyranny they wield. The lines are being drawn and people on both sides are beginning to terrorize each other. Somehow we have to break out of this process, which can only lead to both sides becoming *like* each other. I’m afraid that when the Pentagon is finally stormed and taken, it will be by guys wearing uniforms very much like those worn by the guys defending it.”

Many of us advance into our lives by little more than cause and effect. That is, we take a step for a variety of reasons and, having taken this small initial step, discover the consequences. We are then forced to deal with those consequences, and we do that by rationalizing the original act. Having rationalized it, one has then set up the crude framework of a behavioral pattern which can now be fleshed out by further actions—*proceeding in the same direction*. Each new action, so long as it continues to proceed in the same direction, becomes slightly easier than the one before. It’s like learning to drive, acquiring reflexes. Once one is familiar with the gears it becomes largely automatic. Strong men, or men of action (such as revolutionaries must be), are therefore those whose behavior has been most effectively rationalized. They set themselves in motion automatically. Revolutionary heroes are therefore bound to a large degree to be behavioral automatons. Further, all revolutionaries are forced to accept a discipline which forbids them to freely explore interpretations other than those which serve as the basis for the revolution. Revolutionary zeal is one of the worst forms of tyranny, locking the individual into a position every bit as static as that of his opposite number, the reactionary. At the extremes, in terms of individual personality, the revolutionary and the reactionary merge. For both, the doors leading to personal growth

and development of their own unrealized potential are closed.

The man of action requires an uncluttered setting with simple ground rules in order to function. Ideally: A setting as stark as a boxing ring. Only then can the Aristotelian proposition of either/or be put to work. The object of the revolutionary (or reactionary) game is to reduce complex on-going processes to a fixed game board involving nothing more than two players; black vs. white, good vs. bad, freedom vs. slavery. If he is successful in reducing multi-ordinal reality to a simple game, the revolutionary has then “set the stage” for an uprising. Needless to say, in a complex highly-integrated modern industrial state, the initial task of the revolutionary is that much more difficult.

The point here is simply that the revolutionary stance is an *idée fixe*, monomania. Further, it is, on a grand scale, a kind of decadence—a rejection of the complex (and real) in favor of the simple (and less real). What the revolutionary offers us, finally, is one other idea about how things should be done. His goal is to ram that idea down our throats, and in order to be able to do that, he must first seize power.

Which brings us to the heart of the matter. Chairman Mao advises us that “the seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution.” It is a power struggle first and foremost. Exactly the sort of thing for which the Priest Kings of Nemi stand as the central metaphor. The revolutionary does not want change, he wants *one* change, the change which will bring him into power. And then...? Why then his task is to fight off the next wave of revolutionaries who want another change. “Everybody wants to save the world,” Henry Miller once noted, “but nobody wants to help his neighbor.”

“The urge to manipulate others,” writes George B. Leonard, “whether to ‘solve’ a ‘problem’ or build an empire, begins in the nursery...The drive for surplus power...is born of lack and nourished by deprivation. ‘Power’—the word itself—appears only when there are unfulfilled needs. We would never have heard the term ‘Black Power’ if blacks had been treated fairly. ‘Woman Power’ is a statement of denial, a cry for justice. Ultimately, little will be gained if blacks, women, and others of the oppressed merely gain dominance, thus

triggering yet another cycle of deprivation and desperation....‘Power’ is derived from an Old French word meaning, ‘to be able.’ When we return to this definition, the real question becomes, ‘What do you want to be able to do or be, to feel or enjoy?’ The past has taught us well: Playing power games and losing is a waste of time. Playing power games and getting exactly what you want is the ultimate despair.”

All political parties, whether revolutionary or established (along with their ideologies and systems) are built on a narrow base of power. Some specialize in humanism, others on exploitation, yet others on inevitable conflict. In all cases, the issue of power remains the locus of activity. All existing political organizations (again whether revolutionary or not) remain essentially anthropomorphic. The struggle is between people and groups of people, each locked into a monomaniacal opposing stance. Any disinclination to accept the whole ideological package is a sign of betrayal—one becomes a “revisionist” or a “Commie-lover” or something to that effect, depending on where and what you are. Revolutions are seen as mechanisms whereby our sickness might be cured: racism, greed, insanity, hate, fear, distrust, alienation, poverty, dictatorship. Revolution, at best, is seen as a kind of heart transplant; at worst, lobotomy. Always, of course, for the good of the patient, and always on the assumption that the operation will cure all ills. “Social change” is the vehicle, the means toward the higher end of more moral behavior, of greater brotherly love, of physical well-being, an end to hunger and deprivation

And to affect these tremendous social changes, it remains absolutely necessary to seize power. Underdog must overthrow topdog. Underdog is then the new topdog and the old topdog now has a taste of being underdog. The guard has been changed. There is a new man in the saddle. Beyond that stage, what happens?

The operational mode of thinking remains the trigger of all practical change. Today, Marxism is the mirror image of capitalism, but basically no different. Because Communists and Socialists and Capitalists have all hitched their social wagons to the engine of technology, there can be no basic change. Exploitation of nature remains the key to wealth, whether equally distributed or not. And

through the domination of nature, the men continue to dominate each other and be dominated.

Theodore Roszak puts it well:

To immerse oneself in the old ideologies—with the notable exception of the anarchist tradition which flows from such figures as Kropotkin, Tolstoy, Thoreau—is to find oneself stifling in the stone and steel environment of unquestionable technological necessity. It is a literature of seriousness and grim resolve, tightly bounded by practicality, class discipline, the statistics of injustice, and the lust for retribution. To speak of the ecstasies of life in such a somber environment is to risk folly. Here where all men trudge, none may dance. Dancing is . . . for later. If the demise of the old ideologies begins anywhere, it begins with this delaying gesture. For to postpone until 'later' consideration of the humanly essential in the name of 'being realistic' is to practise the kind of deadly practicality which now stands our civilization in peril of annihilation. It is to deliver us into the hands of the dehumanized commissars, managers, and operational analysts—all of whom are professional experts at postponing the essential. These are the practitioners of what C. Wright Mills called 'crackpot realism.'

Revolution is based in part on the proposition that institutions must be shuffled, and *then* the hearts of men and women can be affected. Control—through the institutional agencies—is the prerequisite for real change. It does not cross the revolutionary mind that institutions are the last extensions of man—that to begin attempting to cure human ills through the agencies of institutions is to start at the ass end. Institutions, laws, legislation and flags can be easily changed—what, we must ask, has that got to do with individuals? Such thinking misses completely the basic psychological insight that we cannot deliberately bring about changes in ourselves or in others. Any intention toward change will have the opposite effect. A “successful” revolution means simply that we are saddled with a new set of controllers. Meanwhile, in our hearts nothing has changed. The power games go on. Exploitation of nature continues. Man is still assumed to be, “realistically,” the center of the universe. A king of flat-earth psychology continues to dominate our collective behavior.

Meanwhile, the earth continues to die.

C. It diverts us from the real struggle, which is to attain a higher level of consciousness, and to explore our potential (which is still unknown.)

Leon Trotsky once prophesied that the final revolution in the world would consist of a series of small and violent upheavals going on everywhere, lasting perhaps for generations. This sounds dead on, yet not even Trotsky could have envisioned how “small” and how “violent.” The final revolution will be taking place in an arena no larger than my head and your head, and it will involve a psychic and emotional violence whose measure has not yet been taken. So long as we are concentrating our energies on power struggles, on toppling institutions only to replace them with others, we are channeling our energies outward; it is an exercise as futile as the trip to the moon, all part of an outward voyage whose aim is exploitation, whose method is manipulation, whose end is power and control. History is a stuck record, with human struggle caught in a single groove, the vicious circle of cyclic recurrence. Down goes one king, and up goes another. The day after a palace is stormed, the new bosses set up shop across the street. We have not yet escaped from collective childhood, in the sense that we still need leaders, and still do not trust our own senses. (Liberals, with their tremendous fear of being “judgmental,” are among the worst offenders. It is the liberals who have come closest to building systems on a fusion of man and his works, yet they have not learned that their weakness—equivocality—is also their greatest potential source of strength.) Revolution is seen always as the means to an end which is human liberation, freedom not only from want, but from the tyranny of the emotions, racism, hatred, murder, crime, and exploitation. “Social change” will lead to a change in consciousness. Yet this is in reality a Rube Goldberg course. The possibility of moving directly from A to B without having to climb to the top of the pyramid in order to get down to the bottom of it, has not even historically been considered; except, of course, by theologians and artists. The only way for the greater human being to come into existence is directly, giving birth to himself. No ideology is prepared to accept the idea that the cure might precede the

revolutionary operation, that perhaps the operation might only make the patient sicker. Change—real change, as opposed to a change of political underwear—will only come after the fact of individual liberation. And since this is something that cannot be organized or led, that does not lend itself to political or ideological frames of reference, it is dismissed (by the operationalists) as being nothing at all. Yet we might with good cause demand: Revolutionary, heal thyself! The real revolution works in exactly the opposite fashion to what has always been assumed to be the case—changing the social institutions does no good, because the last link in the chain, the individual, is the farthest removed from the locus of power. When however, the individual is the *first* link to be affected, it turns out that the seats of power are themselves the last to be changed. Institutions and thrones are about as far removed from the ordinary citizen as anything in the social landscape. The aim of revolutionary types has been to organize the people to move against the thrones, to tear down the institutions. In the process, people submit to discipline and the need for violence, and thus become violent disciplinarians themselves. The fact that they may be crushing an entrenched set of violent disciplinarians at this point makes no real difference. How far have they progressed in the direction of realization of themselves? Nowhere. They may have succeeded in brutalizing themselves, in reverting to the logic of domination and can be certain of emerging from the bloodbath convinced that the operational point of view is the only point of view. Other than that, there is no progress in the critical direction—which is to explore unknown territory, to move upward, not downward, in terms of personal and collective evolution, to acquire a keener vision, a deepening of the senses, an enlargement of vision, to the point where we might perceive subtler harmonies, regularities which were not noticed before, and, finally, to bring our shattered selves back into a working whole. The task is to complete the human being, not turn him back into a barbarian.

The question arises: It's all very well to say that we must all "save ourselves," no one can do it for us, but what about the obvious inequalities of the present system? What about corruption? Police brutality? Militarism? Murder? What good does it do if you liberate

yourself and achieve a state of "higher morality" or whatever, if, in the meantime, Vietnamese peasants continue to be bombed, Blacks are starving in ghettos, Indians are processed and reprocessed through prisons, millions are dying of starvation, madmen have their fingers poised on the nuclear trigger, and the planet is being destroyed by parasitic corporations and governments? Isn't "self-liberation" at this stage a luxury we can ill afford to indulge ourselves in? There is real work to be done, and done in a hurry if we are to survive.

The short answer lies in what Gestalt therapist Fritz Perls describes as the most important phenomenon in all pathology: "self-regulation versus external regulation. The anarchy which is usually feared by the controllers is not an anarchy which is without meaning. On the contrary, it means the organism is left alone to take care of itself, without being meddled with from outside. And I believe this is the great thing to understand: *that awareness per se—by and of itself—can be curative*. Because with full awareness you become aware of this organismic self-regulation, you can let the organism take over without interfering, without interrupting; we can rely on the wisdom of the organism." In the sociological context, the message is clear enough: *awareness* is the starting point for action which is not pre-determined by ideological bias; without awareness, without having gotten to the "center" of our beings, as the Gestaltists call it, without having transcended the operational mode of thinking which reduces our actions to little more than acted-out equations, without having "cured" ourselves of our refusal to let the situation dictate our actions (rather than vice-versa), there is nothing we can do with certainty which will not simply amount to a subtler kind of power-game, a reversal of roles, or—and this is the unavoidable trap—which will not amount in the long run to a projection of our own disequilibrium. This is not to suggest a "moratorium" on political activity, which in itself can be therapeutic, but it is to say that the blind have no right to be leading the blind. Only when our own eyes are open can we presume to lead. Otherwise we may rest assured that whatever illusions we may have about "progress" are in reality nothing more than circular gropings in the dark, with pitfalls everywhere. The answers, once one's eyes are open, can be clearly perceived.

Before proceeding to look beyond the barricades (a garbage heap of antique social furniture) there is a point which needs to be cleared up, since much of what has been said so far about the futility of revolution can easily be misconstrued as a put-down of very real and just revolutions taking place not only in America, but in Canada and Vietnam and elsewhere. My argument is simply that revolution must take the shape of its container; it defines itself in relation to the system it seeks to defy or overthrow. But I am speaking of revolution in the context of the technological society, or one-dimensional society, or the affluent society, or whatever label one chooses to describe what is mainly a white man's modern world. Not everyone in North America lives in that world. The ghettos—whether black ghettos in Los Angeles or Chicago or Eskimo or Indian ghettos in Canada and in the Arctic—are truly another country. And the struggles that go on within these territories are against colonialism, imperialism, and brutal oppression. They have much in common with the struggle of the Vietnamese. The “container” in these cases is quite different from the kind of container in which those of us who are predominantly white and living in suburbs and high-rise apartments find ourselves.

The Hudson Institute has calculated that within thirty years the first four post-industrial societies will have surfaced on the face of the planet. They will be, in this order, the United States, Canada, Japan, and Sweden. They will be characterized by the fact that *per capita* income will range from \$4,000 to \$20,000; most economic activity will have shifted from industrial production to the service industries, research institutes and non-profit organizations; private enterprise will no longer be a major source of scientific and technical development. Large-scale integration will be all but complete. We will be far down the path of convergence with the Communist world. At this point, the technological society will have clamped its iron arms around the world, bioelectronics will have succeeded in literally plugging us into world-wide hookups and a *de facto* police state will have emerged. It is in these areas (the post-industrialized regions) that the obsolescence of revolution will be most apparent.

This is not to say that, *outside* the affluent sphere, revolution will be obsolete. The “wretched of the earth” will still be with us, old-

style police states based on brutality and oppression will still exist, colonialism in a variety of forms will likely still prevail. In these “outside regions,” there is no reason to assume that armed insurrection, revolution, and violent overthrow of corrupt and brutal administrations is in any way unjustified or unnecessary.

To draw our models for revolutionary behavior from these other regions, however, is to refuse to recognize the qualitative differences between these societies. Within a single generation, there will be a difference between the most advanced societies and the ones trailing behind them which will not only be a matter of degree but of kind. Those of us in the most advanced regions will be living in a different world. A fundamental change is involved. For us to continue to assume that revolutionary programs applicable in China, India, most of South America and Africa (areas which have not even approached the industrialized stage) can somehow have any relevance in our own advanced industrial context, is, at best, an unsophisticated notion; at worst, plain stupidity. Within the comfortable concentration camp, inside a system which can absorb and contain and feed on all forms of protest and rebellion, a whole new set of tactics must be evolved, and *are* being evolved. Moreover, we have no choice in the matter, since old-style revolutionary activity simply will not work. We will be effectively blocked from indulging in the kind of uprising and overthrow which amounts to cyclic recurrence. We will have no Bastilles left to storm except those within our skulls, no oppressors left whom we can get our hands on except our egos. The struggles which were always directed outward—against tyrants and dictators—will have been effectively thwarted, and will be turned back on themselves. Inward will go the revolution, turning every man's head into a battlefield.

The “social bottle” of those regions on planet earth which are furthest into the future is different, unique; by the standards of other ages and other cultures, it is downright freaky. It has been molded into a new form—by the computer, by television, by changes in social character, by technoplanning, cybernetics, chemistry, psychology, technique. We all agree it is made from new materials: plastic, nuclear power, vinyl, electronic circuitry, datapoints and programming. Yet

how many of us are prepared to see that revolution, the counterpoint to all that is totalitarian and repressive (even when rationally totalitarian and repressive) must also change; it must, in fact, become as strange, as novel, as freaky as its container. And it is becoming all of that—so much so that most of us fail to recognize it as revolution. In drama we see, as Martin Esslin put it, “By all *traditional* standards of critical appreciation of the drama, these [modern absurd] dramas are not only abominably bad, they do not even deserve the name of drama.” Mark Gerzon goes on to say: “Many people have realized that nothing can be judged by traditional standards, for we do not live any longer in a traditional society. How many parents have said about modern music and painting that they do not even deserve the name? The arts have broken with tradition because they found the limitations on style and structure unnecessary and artificial...” Similarly, “revolution” is in the process of breaking from traditional style and structure.

Same Time

A couple embraces by an iron railing
she laughs and asks something
her question floats up and opens high above
At this hour there's not a wrinkle in the sky
three leaves fall from a tree
someone whistles on the corner
a window lights in the house across the way
How strange to know yourself as alive!
To walk among people
with the open secret of being alive.

—Jorie Graham